

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 04912 01 OF 02 060823Z

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-09 ISO-00 SAJ-01 OMB-01 CIAE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4842

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

USMISSION USUN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

Z/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 556

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 HONG KONG 4912

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.OM 11652: GDS

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PAGE 02 HONG K 04912 01 OF 02 060823Z

TAGS: PFOR, CH

SUBJECT: PEKING'S FOREIGN POLICY RETHING -- THE CONSIDERATIONS

1. SUMMARY: CONSIDERATIONS PEKING ACES IN REASSESSING ITS FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN THE WAKE OF INDOCHINA DEVELOPMENTS PROVIDE A MATRIX FOR REPORTING AND ANALYSIS. END SUMMARY

2. WASHINGTON WILL NOT BE ALONE IN NEEDING--AS THE SECRETARY SAID IN HIS APRIL 24 REMARKS TO THE PRESS--"TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF INDOCHINA ON OUR ALLIES AND ON OTHER COUNTRIES IN THAT AREA AND ON THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF THE UNITED STATES." IN COMMON WITH THE US AND THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA, CHINA WILL ALSO HAVE TO REVIEW ITS FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN LIGHT OF THE US WITHDRAWAL FROM INDOCHINA DND THE ASCENDENCY THERE OF HANOI AND HANOI-DOMINATED COMMUNIST FORCES. WHATEVER ITS CONTINGENCY PLANS WERE, PEKING DID NOT FORESEE EITHER THE SUDDENNESS OF THE DENOUEMENT, ADMITTED IN THE PEOPLE'S DAILY EDITORIAL OF APRIL 25, NOR PROBABLY THE WAY IN WHICH SAIGON COLLAPSED--THROUGH HANOI-SPEARHEADED ASSAULT AND BY MISADVENTURE BUT WITHOUT POPULAR UPRISING FROM WITHIN.

3. ONE CONTRIBUTION WE CAN MAKE TO OUR OWN PROCESS OF REVIEW IS TO TRY TO DEFINE AS SHARPLY AS POSSIBLE FACTORS UNDER CONSIDERATION IN PEKING'S REVIEW OF THE SITUATION. RATHER THAN ATTEMPT A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS, WHICH WOULD UNAVOIDABLY BE EITHER HIGHLY SUBJECTIVE OR VERY BELATED, WE PROPOSE AS INFORMATION IS DEVELOPED TO COVER THE FOLLOWING GENEAL CONSIDERATIONS WHICH WE THINK WILL BE FOREMOST IN THE CHINESE MIND.

SUPPORT FOR INSURGENCY

4. IS ASIA, IN A REVOLUTIONARY'S EQUIVALENT OF THE DOMINO THEORY, READY NOW FOR STEPPED-UP INSURGENCY? PEKING CAN HARDLY IGNORE ITS OWN IDEOLOGICAL PROFESSIONS ABOUT THE CORRECTNESS OF ARMED STRUGGLE AND JUST WARS, AND IT MAY BE HARD TO BRUSH OFF REQUESTS FOR INCREASED CHINESE SUPPORT FROM INSURGENT GROUPS--WHO MIGHT JUST ESCALATE THEIR OPERATIONS ANYWAY WITHOUT WAITING FOR A NOD. (IN SOME COUNTRIES INSURGENTS ARE GOING TO LOOK TALLER TO THEMSELVES AS WELL AS TO THE GOVERNMENT.)

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PAGE 03 HONG K 04912 01 OF 02 060823Z

5. THEN THERE IS THE FRESHNESS AND DRAMA OF HANOI'S SUCCESSES--THE VIET CONG TANK BUTTING DOWN THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE GATES- WHICH GIVE HANOI THE POTENTIAL ROLE OF LEADING MODEL FOR INSURGENCY IN FORMIDABLE RIVALRY WITH PEKING. PEKING MUST WEIGH IN CONJUNCTION WITH PRC POLITICAL OBJECTIVES IN THE AREA WHETHER A CONTINUATION OF THE PRESENT LOW-KEY CHINESE CONNECTION WITH INSURGENCIES IS DESIRABLE OR

WHETHER IT HAS TO BE ALTERED. THE POLITICAL LEVERAGE
VIS-A-VIS THE HOST GOVERNMENTS THAT CAN BE GENERATED THROUGH
INSURGENT LINKS WILL NEED TO BE REEXAMINED IN LIGHT OF HANOI'S
POTENTIAL COMPETITION FOR THE LEADING ROLE IN INSURGENCIES.
AT A MINIMUM, THE AREAS OF POSSIBLE CHINESE AND VIETNAMESE
CONTENTION, SUCH AS IN LAOS AND THAILAND, WILL BECOME MORE
SHARPLY DEFINED AND THE LIKELIHOOD OF GREATER FRICTIONS
MAGNIFIED.

THE US-HOW FAR BACK?

6. THE CHINESE WILL NEED TO ASSESS THE KIND OF US POSTURE
IN ASIA LIKELY TO BE SUSTAINED BY US DOMESTIC SUPPORT AS
WELL AS ASIAN AREA POLITICS. THE CHINESE MAY NOT PERCEIVE
THAT THE US, BEING IN THEIR TERMS IMPERIALISTIC, COULD
COMPLETELY TURN AWAY FROM ALL FORMS OF INTERVENTION IN ASIA,
BUT PEKING IN RECENT YEARS HAS SEEN THE US TO BE IN RETREAT
AND DOUBTLESS NOW ASKS HOW FAR BACK THE US IS GOING TO FALL,
AND DOES IT MATTER? NOW THAT THE US IS NOT FIGHTING ANYONE
IN INDOCHINA, AND THAILAND AND THE PHILIPPINES ARE RECONSIDER-
ING THE MAINTENANCE OF US BASES IN THEIR COUNTRIES, THE US
MILITARY PRESENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA COULD BE EXPECTED TO
THIN OUT AND EVEN DISAPPEAR UNLESS CONDITIONS FOR IT ARE
SHORED UP OR RENEWED. DOES THE US STILL HAVE AN IMPORTANT
ROLE TO PLAY IN PREVENTING SOVIET HEGEMONY IN THE AREA, AND
WHERE AND WHAT KIND OF US PRESENCE IS NECESSARY AND POSSIBLE
TO SUPPORT SUCH A ROLE? CHINESE ANALYSTS WILL LOOK TO US
MEDIA AND CONGRESSIONAL OPINION IN ASSESSING THE SUSTENANCE
FOR US POLICY PRONOUNCEMENTS.

TAIWAN

7. CHINA NEEDS WITH SOME URGENCY TO KNOW WHETHER IN THE WAKE
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PAGE 04 HONG K 04912 01 OF 02 060823Z

OF INDOCHINA THE US WILL BE RELUCTANT TO WITHDRAW MILITARY
SUPPORT FROM ANOTHER ALLY--OR, CONVERSELEY, IF AMERICAN
DOMESTIC AND CONGRESSINAL OPINION WILL FAVOR MORE RAPID US
MOVEMENT ON THE TAIWAN ISSUE. THE TERMS OF THE SHANGHAI
COMMUNIQUE AS THEY APPLY TO THE REMOVAL OF US MILITARY
PRESENCE IN TAIWAN COULD BE SEEN AS COMING INTO EFFECT
WITH THE ENDING OF HOSTILITIES AND EASING OF TENSION IN
THE AREA. PEKING MIGHT THEREFORE WANT TO CONSIDER WHETHER
TO PRESS FOR US WITHDRAWAL AND TO INTENSIFY PRESSURES ON
TAIPEI--OR TO SHOW PATIENCE AND COMPOSURE WHICH MIGHT
CONVEY A SENSE OF CHINESE SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED US MILITARY
PRESENCE IN THE AREA.

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PAGE 01 HONG K 04912 02 OF 02 060922Z

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AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 HONG KONG 4912

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CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 HONG K 04912 02 OF 02 060922Z

8. PEKING WILL WISH TO ASSESS VERY CAREFULLY THE DIFFICULT AND TRICKY TASK OF BALANCING CLOSE RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA AND MOVING FORWARD TO ENTENTE WITH THE US AND JAPAN. THE CHINESE SEE THAT THE COCKPIT IN THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE US AND JAPAN AFTER INDOCHINA COULD SHIFT TO KOREA, AND THEY WILL HAVE NOTED THE RIPPLES CAUSED BY KIM IL-SUNG'S RECENT VISIT TO PEKING. EVEN IF THE CHINESE FEEL THEY CAN RESTRAIN KIM UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, THEY MUST, IF ONLY FROM IDEOLOGICAL BELIEF, EXPECT ANTI-PARK MANIFESTATIONS IN THE SOUTH, WHICH WILL AT MINIMUM RAISE TENSIONS AND UPSET JAPAN, BUT WHICH COULD ALSO TRIGGER NORTH KOREAN MOVES. PEKING NEEDS TO FIND THE POINT AT WHICH A NUMBER OF LINES WOULD CROSS, INCLUDING THE US RESPONSE TO NEW TENSIONS IN KOREA AND KIM'S OPTION FOR SOVIET SUPPORT. WITH HOSTILE RUSSIANS TO THE NORTH AND POTENTIALLY TROUBLESOME, PRO-SOVIET VIETNAMESE TO THE SOUTH, PEKING WILL BE ALERT FOR PROSPECTIVE SOVIET GAINS IN THIS AREA AND PROBABLY CANNOT EXCLUDE THAT JAPAN, CURRENTLY SHY ON ADVANCING THE APPEARANCE OF A SINO-US-JAPAN AXIS AGAINST SOVIET HEGEMONY IN ASIA AND ALSO WATCHFUL OF US RESOLVE, WOULD REACT WITH VERY GREAT ALARM TO TURMOIL IN KOREA AND TURN TOWARD MOSCOW FOR SECURITY.

HANOI

9. PEKING VERY LIKELY SEES THAT HANOI WILL BE FULL OF ITSELF AND HAVE ONE OF THE FINEST, BATTLE-HARDENED ARMIES IN THE WORLD WITH CONSIDERABLE MILITARY SUPPLIES. NONE OF ITS INDOCHINA NEIGHBORS ARE A MATCH FOR IT, NOT IS THAILAND. OFFERS OF HUMANITARIAN AND REDEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE WILL BE THRUST UPON HANOI FROM EVERYWHERE AND HANOI MAY NOT HAVE TO BEG OR BE BEHOLDEN TO ANYONE. SUPPLIES NEED NOT CROSS CHINA, BUT CAN COME BY SEA TO SEVERAL FINE PORTS; WE NOTE PRESS REPORTS THAT RUSSIAN SHIPS ARE ALREADY DISCHARGING ASSISTANCE AT DA NANG. AN ANTI-CHINESE STANCE WILL COME NATURALLY TO THE VIETNAMESE AND BE ENCOURAGED BY THE SOVIETS AND BY SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES, WHILE THE TERRITORIAL ISSUE OVER THE PARACEL AND SPRATLEY ISLANDS PROVIDES A READY STARTING PLACE FOR A SINO-VIETNAMESE DISPUTE.

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PAGE 03 HONG K 04912 02 OF 02 060922Z

10. PEKING HAS ALREADY GIVEN THOUGHT TO THIS SITUATION, AS EVINced BY THE WAY THE CHINESE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN INDOCTRINATED IN THE RIGHTNESS OF CHINA'S CLAIM TO THE PARACEL ISLANDS. EVENTS HAVE PROBABLY OUTPACED PREPARATIONS, HOWEVER, AND PEKING WILL LIKELY HAVE TO SEE WHAT WORKS FROM AMONG ITS CONTINGENCY PLANS--PLANS WHICH HAVE BEEN HARD FOR US TO ASSESS BECAUSE ONE CHINESE OBJECTIVE IS TO KEEP SINO-VIETNAMESE PROBLEMS UNDER COVER AND "IN THE FAMILY."

USSR

11. CURRENT CHINESE DIATRIBES AGAINST THE RUSSIANS POINT TO AN ITCH PEKING CANNOT REACH. THE SOVIETS HAVE ALREADY ENGAGED JAPAN OVER THE HEGEMONY ISSUE, AND THERE IS EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE THEY WILL BEAT HANOI'S EAR FOR WHATEVER ANTI-CHINA MOVES ARE POSSIBLE. THE RUSSIANS WILL ENCOURAGE SOUTHEAST ASIA TO VIEW HANOI AS COUNTERPOISE TO PEKING. A RUMOR HERE THAT THE SOVIETS ARE DICKERING FOR BASE RIGHTS AT CAMRANH BAY SUGGEST THE EXTREME TO WHICH CHINESE ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET MOVES WILL HAVE TO GO.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

12. PEKING SHOULD PROBABLY ASSUME THERE WILL BE A TENDENCY AMONG SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES TO COURT HANOI, OR BE AFRAID OF IT--OR BOTH--AND TO WANT TO SEE VIETNAM AS A COUNTERPOISE TO PEKING. PEKING WILL BE ALERT OF THIS, AS FOR EXAMPLE, IN THAI RECOGNITION OF THE PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT IN SAIGON. THE RECIPROCAL OF THIS, OF COURSE, IS THAT THE SAME NATIONS CAN EQUALLY LOOK UPON THE COURT PEKING AS A COUNTERPOISE TO HANOI. IN EITHER CASE, THE PRESSURE WOULD WORK TOWARD AGGRAVATING STRAINS BETWEEN PEKING AND HANOI. ALSO, THE SOVIETS HAVE AN APPRECIABLE PRESENCE AND INFLUENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA OF THEIR OWN APART FROM WORKING THROUGH HANOI, AND THE CHINESE WILL BE ANXIOUS TO SEE HOW THIS DEVELOPS IN THE WAKE OF ALTERATIONS
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 HONG K 04912 02 OF 02 060922Z

TO THE US POSITION IN THE AREA.

INDIA, NATO, ETC.

13. A REVIEW OF CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY WILL TOUCH ON THE EFFECT OF DEVELOPMENTS IN INDOCHINA WHEREVER THOSE EFFECTS ARE SEEN TO DEVELOP, BUT INDIA AND NATO WILL PROBABLY BE INCLUDED AUTOMATICALLY--SOVIET--ALIGNED INDIA FOR ITS ALREADY WORRISOME EXPANSIONIST MOVES ALONG CHINA'S SOUTHWEST BORDER, AND NATO FOR THE IMPACT UPON EUROPEAN ALLIANCE WITH THE US AND DETENTE WITH THE USSR.

CHINESE INTERESTS

14. THESE AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS ENTERING INTO THE CHINESE REVIEW OF FOREIGN POLICY WILL BE PRIMARILY ASSESSED FOR THEIR IMPACT ON CHINA'S NEW GOAL, PRONOUNCED IN JANUARY, OF DEVELOPING THE NATION INTO A "POWERFUL MODERN SOCIALIST" STATE BY THE END OF THIS CENTURY. THIS INTERNAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DRIVE UPON WHICH THE CHINESE ARE EMBARKED, OR ON WHICH THEY ARE TRYING TO EMBARK AGAINST THE CURRENTS OF A STILL-TRoubLED DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION, REQUIRES A LONG PERIOD OF PEACE AND TABILITY IN ASIA. IN MAKING ITS ASSESSMENT, PEKING WILL HAVE THIS REQUIREMENT FOEMOST IN MIND.

15. WE WILL BE USING THE ABOVE AS A ROUGH MATRIX FOR OUR REPORTING AND ANALYSIS. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO SET A TIME-TABLE FOR THIS, AND WE SHALL HAVE TO TAKE INDICATIONS OF CHINESE THINKING AS THEY COME, WORKING THEM INTO THIS TEMPORARY FRAME UNTIL THE GENUINE OUTLINE OF CHINESE CONSIDERATIONS BECOMES APPARENT.

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